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Essays, Expositions, &c.

THE NATIONAL SUPPORT OF IDOLATRY.

MANY lamented the support of idolatry in India by the British Government. They pleaded against it, and their plea, to a great extent, prevailed. But to the support of idolatry by the British Government AT HOME, we are too indifferent. So few oppose it ACTIVELY, that they are not regarded, and the evil continues and extends.

It is full of peril to the nation. Idolatry is an insult to God, it provokes him to hot anger. Idolatry is a curse to man; a curse present and eternal. It leads God to give him up to the passions, vices, and crimes, described by Paul in the epistle to the Romans; it makes his anger burn like fire. The idolatry which AT HOME receives already from the public purse three or four hundred thousand a year, and which many propose to endow with a far larger amount of the public wealth, hath shown by its history that it produces the full measure of that vice and crime which the apostle describes; and brings down judgments as terrible as those with which God has visited any system of idolatry on the face of the globe. The horrors of the French Revolution are among the most dreadful proofs of his anger against it.

Indeed, it must be MORE HATEFUL TO GOD THAN ANY OTHER IDOLATRY. The teachers of Pagan idolatry are in darkness; the rulers of this have the book of God before them, they profess to be its only true interpreters. Other idolaters have blotted out the knowledge of God taught by creation; these have blotted out the knowledge of Him revealed by his Son; they have turned the very way of life into a pathway to deeper destruction; they have added to the sins of other idolaters a bolder rebellion against God, and a more intense hatred of his people. The daring with which they have assumed his attributes, and violated his will,—the tortures which they have inflicted, the rivers of blood they have shed in their persecution of his saints, must be without comparison of guilt in his esteem.

HIS HATRED OF ALL IDOLATRY IS INTENSE; THE ANGER WITH WHICH HE VISITS IT, BOTH IN TIME AND ETERNITY, BURNS LIKE FIRE. He said by Moses to Israel:

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: THOU SHALT NOT BOW DOWN THYSELF TO THEM, NOR SERVE THEM" (Ex. xx. 5). Compare Deut. iv. 16, 17; v. 8.

"Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God; which He made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of anything, which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee; for the Lord thy God is A CONSUMING FIRE, EVEN A JEALOUS GOD" (iv. 23, 24).

"When . . . . ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and shall do evil in the sight of the Lord thy God, to provoke him to anger; I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon UTTERLY PERISH from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it; but shall UTTERLY BE DESTROYED" (Deut. iv. 25, 26).

"The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shall not desire the silver or gold that is on them nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is AN ABOMINATION to the Lord thy God. Neither shall thou bring AN ABOMINATION into thy home, lest thou be A CURSED THING like it; but thou shalt UTTERLY DETEST it and thou shalt UTTERLY ABHOR IT; for it is A CURSED THING" (Deut. vii. 25, 26).

By Ezekiel he said:

"Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of MY GOLD and of MY SILVER which I had given thee, and madest to thyself IMAGES of men, and didst commit whoredom with them; and tookest MY broidered garments and coveredst them; . . . MY food also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey wherewith I fed thee thou hast even set it before them for a sweet savour" (Ez. xvi. 17—19). "Behold, therefore, I will gather all thy lovers, with whom thou hast taken pleasure, and all them that thou hast loved, with all them that thou hast hated: . . . . and will also GIVE THEE INTO THEIR HANDS, and they shall throw down thy eminent place, and shall break down thy high places; they shall strip thee also of thy clothes, and shall take thy fair jewels, and LEAVE THEE NAKED AND BARE" (xvi. 37—39).

IN THE NEW COVENANT idolatry is spoken of with like severity, and Christians are forbidden to give it any countenance.

The word "IDOL" is a Greek word meaning IMAGE. IDOLATRY, means THE WORSHIP OF AN IMAGE.

NO IDOLATER HAS ETERNAL LIFE: "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor IDOLATERS, ... shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10). "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these:—adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, IDOLATRY," &c.; "respecting which I forewarn you, as I also told you before, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. v. 19—21). "If any man WORSHIP THE BEAST AND HIS IMAGE, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be TORMENTED WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up FOR EVER AND EVER: and they have NO REST DAY NOR NIGHT" (Rev. xiv. 10, 11).

CHRISTIANS ARE FORBIDDEN TO DO ANY ACT WHICH MAY EVEN BE SUPPOSED BY OTHERS TO BE INTENDED TO GIVE HONOUR TO AN IDOL. Both Jewish and Gentile Christians were commanded by the Holy Spirit to abstain from eating food which was declared to have been offered in sacrifice to idols (Acts xv. 28, 29). In case of ignorance as to whether it had been offered to them or not, they were not to ask any question; but if any one said that the food they were about to eat had been offered to an idol, they were not to eat of it; lest others should SUPPOSE that they meant thereby to honour the idol to whom it had been offered (1 Cor. viii. 4—13; x. 25—32). They were "to flee from idolatry" (x. 14). The apostle said, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; ye cannot partake of the Lord's table and the table of demons" (x. 21).

These passages forbid us to have ANY CONNECTION WHATEVER WITH IDOLATRY; they forbid us to do any thing which may APPEAR TO OTHERS, though NOT

INTENDED BY OURSELVES, to do honour to an idol. But if we INTENTIONALLY support idolatry, by gift, or any other personal act, we then participate, in some degree, in the idolatry itself; and are in peril of being declared by God to be ourselves idolaters, and shut out from his eternal kingdom (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10).

THOSE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS who devote the funds which have been raised for the government of the nation, to the promotion of idolatry, become responsible by so doing, not only for their own support of idolatry, but for involving the whole nation in the terrible evils to which their support of it leads. They are responsible for enabling a system, so terrible in history, to gain strength, so as to threaten again our civil and religious liberties; and to put in peril the progress of the nation, in knowledge, morals, industry, peacefulness, and true piety; they are responsible for doing that which, as we know from God's word, will provoke him to anger, and if pursued, will lead him to cast us down from our high position, to give us into the hands of our enemies, and leave us "naked and bare" (Ez. xvi. 39).

THE ELECTORS WHO RETURN MEMBERS TO PARLIAMENT have much influence with those who represent them not only at elections, but at other times. It may be that timely remonstrance from those who feel the sin and peril of the national support of idolatry, may be blessed by God to stay this greatest of our dangers. If we are electors we can scarcely be faithful to the trust which God has reposed in us unless we use whatever influence we may possess with those who represent us, to induce them to oppose this evil.

BUT THE MASSES OF THE PEOPLE, could exert greater influence. Their feelings when expressed in public meetings, and in numerous, earnest petitions, have often turned the course of legislation. How is it that while evil in so terrible a form is rising into power they are so little interested! Why sleep we? The whole atmosphere is charged with signs of peril. A storm which threatens civil strife and danger to our dearest liberties, is blackening the whole sky. If indifference should last much longer, the opportunity for peaceful effort may have passed away. It is not difficult to see that the claim which even idolaters have on the civil government to protect them from wrong, is NOT a claim on the civil government TO COMPEL OTHERS TO SUPPORT THEIR IDOLATRY; and yet the compulsion of those who hate idolatry to give money for the endowment of idolatry is spoken of by many as if it were a matter of justice. Not even the mistaken view that the state is bound to support TRUE RELIGION, if it knows what it is, gives any sanction to the support of TWO systems, so opposite and hostile, that if one be true, the other must be false. To propose the support of two such systems as these at the same time, is to imply indifference as to whether TRUTH or FALSEHOOD be upheld, if only other ends be gained. But every mind that is not lost to principle must say, perish all ends that take not truth for guide. The endowment even of Protestantism has evils to which even its advocates cannot be blind; but when some who advocate endowments show that it is the ENDOWMENT ITSELF which they desire as THEIR CHIEF END, and that, if this be secured, they care not what it is that is endowed, then all who value truth must own, that truth must be unfettered, and mammon fall! that all endowment by the state must cease, rather than the nation worship gold alone.

Popery, though called Christianity, is in reality a system of idolatry. No one who believes that the book of Revelation applies to it those terms, descriptive of inchastity, which are applied to idolatry in the Old Covenant, can doubt that God esteems it to be gross idolatry.

The worship of the VIRGIN MARY; of MEN and WOMEN who have passed away; the bowing down to STATUES, PICTURES, &c.; the adoration of mere BREAD and WINE; the ascription to the POPE, the BISHOPS, and the PRIESTHOOD of divine power to FORGIVE SINS, DECREE WORSHIP, and CONTROL THE STATE OF MEN IN ANOTHER WORLD, all concur to prove that the system by which Rome hopes to rule the world, is one of "abominable idolatry."

As the articles of the Church of England teach, "the Romish doctrine con-

cerning . . . . worshipping and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also Invocation of Saints is a fond thing vainly invented," and "repugnant to the word of God." "The Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance worshipped" (Acts xxii. 28).

Has Britian suffered so much in vain? Will she with her own hand, contribute to exalt once more the power which has crushed her? The greatest danger at present is in Parliament. There the struggle for power is incessant. Rome aspires to turn the balance which decides the power of political parties. In return for those votes which keep a ministry in power, or which make it fall, the reward sought is generally some new gift of state—support for Popery itself.

And what is promised as the great reward of these concessions? It is this; that Rome will at last assume authority to admonish all our Rulers "NOT TO PERMIT ITS DECREES TO BE VIOLATED BY HERETICS" (See Council of Trent Sess. 25, A.D. 1563).

W. NORTON.

COME AWAY FROM ROME.

BY T. W. MEDHURST, GLASGOW; AUTHOR OF "ROMANISM NOT CHRISTIANITY BUT A SATANIC DELUSION," ETC.

"DEAR SIR,—In your Lecture on '*Romanism not Christianity but a Satanic Delusion*,' you say, 'Have nothing of Romanism in your services, in your *buildings*, in your *forms*, in your *attire*. *Fling away that useless cross*.' 'Come out of her.' 'Remember Lot's wife.' And in the *extract* from your former Lecture on, '*I confess I am a Heretic*,' you assert, 'The tendency of the age is towards Rome.' You then ask, 'What mean those *crosses upon our churches*, upon the *covers of our Bibles*, and *hanging suspended from the necks of so many young ladies*? Why are our *buildings named after so-called saints*? How is it we are hearing so much *in favour of liturgies, choirs, organs*, and so much *against our creeds, standards, and confessions*?

"Will you kindly favour me with a few words in explanation of your severe condemnation of what appears to me to be not altogether deserving of such strong language. I confess I have no sympathy with what I consider is a foolish custom, viz., the use of the cross, and the calling of our places of worship by the names of so-called saints; but I cannot see anything positively wrong or harmful in these things. I am, yours respectfully,

"A TRUE PROTESTANT."

The above letter expresses the feelings of a large number of Christians in the present day. They have an utter abhorrence to the use of the cross, and to the worship of saints by *Romanists;* but they see no positive harm in the use of the cross by *Protestants*, or in the naming of Protestant places of worship after so-called saints. A little calm reflection however, will, I trust, convince such that these things are positively harmful.

I. I OBJECT TO THE USE OF THE CROSS BY PROTESTANTS. First, *Because it was the instrument of Christ's death.* When Paul gloried in the cross of Christ, he did not mean that he gloried in the literal cross, but in the atonement which was accomplished by Christ on the cross. The literal cross was the emblem of Christ's cruel death by the hands of his murderers, and is no more to be reverenced than the spear, the nails, the crown of thorns, the soldier's scourge, or the brutal jests of the Scribes, Pharisees, and rabble crowd.

Second, *Because the cross is an object of idolatrous worship by the Romanists.* Hezekiah was a thorough Reformer. "He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan," *that is a piece of brass* (2 Kings xviii. 4). Why did Hezekiah "cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent"? Because the groves were the places where idols had been set up and worshipped. There was nothing positively sinful in the groves themselves. There could not be anything wrong in the cluster of trees. Those trees were very beautiful—they were the work of God; but they were asso-

ciated with idolatry, images had been worshipped beneath them, and, therefore down they must come. "The brazen serpent that Moses had made," was made by the positive command of God, it had been blessed by God as the instrument in the healing of the serpent-bitten-people, and was a striking type of the Lord Jesus Christ, why then did Hezekiah break it in pieces, and contemptuously call it a trifle of brass? Because "the children of Israel did burn incense to it." Is there not an exact parallel between the serpent of brass and the cross? *Before both incense has been burnt. Both are associated with idolatry.* Therefore, as Hezekiah brake the brazen serpent in pieces, and called it in contempt "A piece of brass," so let all true Protestants fling away from them the useless cross; let them pull it down from their places of worship as an odious thing; let them banish it from their families as the emblem of anti-Christ; let them discountenance it wherever and whenever they have opportunity as that idolatrous thing which has caused so many thousands to sin. The use of the cross by Romanists is an idol, a teacher of lies, a horrible thing; and yet Protestants will decorate their churches and chapels with, and wear it as an ornament! Is not this grossly inconsistent?

J. A. Haldane, in his exposition of Paul's words, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. vi. 14), says, "It is hardly necessary to observe, that by the cross of Christ is not meant the material cross on which Christ suffered. The cross has become an object of idolatrous veneration. It was not a piece of wood in the form of a cross, but the doctrine of the Son of God suffering and dying on the cross, which was to "the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." We are guarded against superstitious regard of a crucifix, by the history of the brazen serpent. By looking at it, all who were bitten by the fiery serpents were healed. There might appear no harm in retaining such a memorial of the power of the God of Israel. He had commanded a pot of manna to be laid up in commemoration of the bread with which he fed his people in the wilderness, and the observance of this ordinance produced no bad effects. But no such commandment had been given in regard to the serpent; its preservation was a human device, and like every other contrivance of man in religion, however plausible, it proved a snare; the children of Israel burnt incense to it, but Hezekiah broke it in pieces, saying it was only a bit of brass."

In these days of Romanism and Ritualism, it behoves us to put far away from us everything in the slightest manner approaching to Popery. There is incipient danger in the present absurd, ugly, idolatrous fashion of wearing of crosses, black beads, &c. Let us "*Remember Lot's wife.*"

Third, *Because when Protestants wear the cross, or the beads, they put a stumbling-block in the way of Roman Catholics.* If I wear the cross on my bosom, how can I convince the Romanist that he is guilty of idolatry in his use of it? If I have a cross upon the building in which I worship God, how can I boldly denounce the superstitious use of the cross by the poor deluded follower of Popery? It is impossible, I cannot do so. My own acts will contradict my words. Then for the sake of my fellow men who are held in bondage to anti-Christ, I call upon all true Protestants to fling away the harmful cross.

II. I OBJECT TO THE NAMING OF PROTESTANT MEETING HOUSES AFTER SO-CALLED SAINTS. First, *Because all believers in Christ Jesus are saints.* Scripture teaches me that God's children are all one in Christ. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, and Paul, are saints only in *the same sense* in which each true Christian is a saint. All who believe are alike sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints; that is, separated persons. Separated by the eternal election of the Father, by the vicarious blood-shedding of the Son, and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, and Paul,

are *glorified* saints, and the humblest believers are *militant* saints. That is the only difference between them. What God's children are they are by the grace of God.

Second, *Because to call Protestant places of worship after so-called saints is to countenance the idolatrous canonisation of the Romish harlot.* Let Rome have her saints if she sees fit, but let Protestants forswear the remotest connection with that system which is an enemy to God, and purity, and truth. Rome manufactures her saints; let Protestants blush that they have traded in her manufactory, and borrowed her wares! Can the worshippers in the Protestant Church named after "*St. Jude*," or "*St. Mary*," or "*St. Enoch*," honestly rebuke the deluded votaries of saint-worship in the Papal church? They must be brazen-faced indeed if they attempt to do so. It is Satan that has begotten anti-Christ. Let all God's people keep away from her. Let them in no degree partake of her sins. Let them renounce with a holy loathing all her symbols. Let them throw off with righteous indignation the faintest approach to her allegiance. Let them have nothing of Romanism in their doctrines. Let them contend earnestly for the pure faith of the gospel of Jesus. Let them hear the voice speaking from heaven, and saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."

LASTLY, I OBJECT TO LITURGIES, CHOIRS, AND ORGANS, because, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John iv. 24). The *Æsthetic* in religion appeals to man's carnal nature, but is altogether opposed to the simplicity of New Testament worship. To introduce into the service of the sanctuary what God has not commanded is will-worship. The same proof can be given for the sprinkling of water on infants, instead of believer's baptism, as can be given for the use of organs, liturgies, and choirs, in the services of God's house; and consistent Baptists at any rate will forswear both. But alas! where is consistency now-a-days to be found? Forsooth, Baptist meeting-houses must now be called churches, and have spires, and chancels, and organs, and crosses, and stained glass windows! so that the term "*Nonconformist*" is, we fear, mis-applied, for verily, we are daily getting more and more conformed to this present evil world. Truly, brethren, there is need that one sound an alarm. Ritualism and Romanism are making rapid strides, let us be careful lest we in any way assist in their fatal progress. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.

JOTTINGS OF THOUGHTS ON THE "PILGRIM'S PROGRESS."

SCENE IV.

CHRISTIAN had parted with good Mr. Evangelist but a short time before his neighbours came out to see him; and as he ran, some mocked, some threatened, and others did their best to induce him to return. Amongst those who came after Christian were two men by the names of Obstinate and Pliable. These names are the representatives of two distinct and very opposite classes of character which are often met with in the world.

Obstinate stands for those who are violently opposed to religion. They are persons with whom reason or argument has no power, and whose prejudices and antipathies are very strong. Usually they are of a sour disposition. If they take a dislike to a doctrine or a person, there is no moving them. They are as unyielding as those fourlegged quadrupeds known as the ass and the calf. One may talk to them with all the emphasis he can command about the authority and revelations of the Bible; but their only reply is—"away with your book." One may speak to them about the bliss and glories of heaven; but their reply is—"Don't talk to me about these things, they are only a mith—a mirage in the desert." "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." The fact is, all such are more influenced by sense than by faith, or reason, and have far greater regard to what they can see and hear, than to the voice of

God, speaking in his word. Punch, is more prized than the Bible; Drury-lane, and Covent Garden, aremore frequented than St. Paul's, or the Tabernacle. They would rather sing songs than hear sermons, and much prefer a sip from the sparkling cup of Bacchus, to a draught from the river of life. Persons of this type are little more than flesh. So small are their souls that you could put them in a nut-shell, and even then, as Robert Hall remarks, they may become so beautifully less, as to creep out through a maggot-hole. Try and find in them any thing worthy of the name of *mind*, and the search would be as unprofitable as seeking for a needle in a bundle of hay, or a grain of wheat in a sack of chaff.

Pliable is the representative of a harmless class of persons, who can speak against no one. Their is something very genial in their dispositions, and they are susceptible of impressions. Only describe an object that is lovely, and they become enamoured to an ecstacy. Paint the scene of Calvary, with all its attendant circumstances, and you draw tears from their eyes. Enlarge on the glories of heaven—its jasper walls, its pearly gates, its golden streets, and its emerald throne, and they are all eagerness to possess it. They hear of a kingdom that cannot be moved; of an inheritance that is incorruptible; of crowns that are as brilliant as the sun; of garments white as light; of cherubim and seraphim, who enrapture those who behold them. Hence their language: "The hearing of this is enough to ravish one's heart—come, let us mend our pace."

But though the minister is to them as one that can sing like a nightingale, and play on a harp, like David, yet there is no reliance on the Pliables. They are all impulse and feeling; there is no principle, and therefore no stability. They run well for a time, but soon run themselves out. Hence the first difficulty or trouble that arises in consequence of their religion, cools their fiery zeal, and they return to the world. For heaven's sake they cannot endure a sneer, much less the spoiling of their goods. Religion for them must have sun-shine days, good roads, and silver slippers: let but storms arise, and sloughs and bogs present themselves, and our Pliables become offended.

"When any turn from Zion's way,—
Alas what numbers do!—
Methinks I hear my Saviour say
Wilt thou forsake me too?
Ah, Lord! with such a heart as mine,
Unless thou hold me fast,
I feel I must, I shall decline,
And prove like them at last."

SCENE V.

Bunyan's Pilgrim having escaped the snare of Mr. Worldly Wiseman, and being reproved by his faithful friend Evangelist—for harkening to such worldly counsel, at last arrives at the gate to which he had been directed. This gate is an emblem of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to enter therein is to enter into union with him, and thus to become a true disciple indeed. Hence says the Redeemer: "I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved." "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Thus just as by a door or gate we get access to a house, or a garden, so by faith in Christ, we get access to all the blessings of salvation and of grace. But in connection with this scene, three things may be noticed.

The words over the gate. "Knock and it shall be opened, &c." Knocking denotes application for mercy, which we make to Christ by faith and prayer. However willing the Saviour may be to receive broken-hearted sinners, he expects that we shall ask before we receive, and seek if we would find. How simple is this condition, how reasonable, and how adapted to the case of the sinner! What more simple than knocking, and what more reasonable than asking? If any, therefore, are excluded from the blessings of salvation, may

they not blame themselves? If they have too much pride to pray, they have too much pride to enter the kingdom of heaven.

But observe *the Castle by the side of the gate.* This is the palace of Beelzebub, the prince and generalissimo of all the powers of hell. The artist in this scene has presented a very solemn fact. Satan is represented as using instruments of destruction against the Christian pilgrim as he stands before the gate, knocking for entrance. These instruments are no other than fiery darts, tipped with the poison of hell. In other words, they are strong temptations to prevent an applicant sinner from persevering in prayer. Bunyan knew well these temptations, and in describing the scene now before us, his pencil was dipped in the colours of his own experience. Whilst on his knees before the throne of grace, his great enemy would often appear at his side suggesting such thoughts as these: "Your sins are too heinous and too many to be forgiven; you have sinned beyond the reach of mercy; Divine Justice will never receive satisfaction for you; the blood of Christ has no efficacy for you: and even the spirit of God will never be a friend to you. Prayer is a vain thing in your case, for ask as you will, you will not receive, and knock as you may the door will not be opened. Alas! how many besides Bunyan have been discouraged in prayer by such thoughts as these. But let them turn round upon the arch-deceiver, and say—"get thee hence Satan, for thou art an offence unto me." I see the gate before me, and will knock for entrance.

"If I perish, I will pray;
And perish only there."

But now in this picture observe *the grave person who opened the gate.* His name is Goodwill. Here we have the grace of God personified. He opens and no man shuts, and shuts and no man opens. It is his act, and his alone that can bring us into union with Christ, and give us a right start in the pilgrimage to a better world. And is not this an act of the greatest kindness? When a felon, cast for death, is pardoned, how the clemency of the sovereign is eulogized! When the slave has been ransomed at a high price, how much is the benefactor extolled! When the beggar in the streets, half covered with rags, and shivering with cold, is taken into a house, warmed, fed, and clothed, how we praise the generous act! But what is the kindness of man, compared with the grace of God? How rich, how full, how free, how infinite his love to those who come to him, through Christ, in humility and faith! What pardons he bestows; what sins he removes; what wants he meets; what kind words he speaks; and what smiles he gives. Yes, it is good for us to draw nigh unto God, for in asking we receive, in seeking we find, and in knocking, the goodwill of heaven opens the door of mercy to earnest applicants. Oh how many have been burdened and heavy-laden, but by prayer, they have rolled it upon the Lord, and found relief. They have been sore pressed by the enemy, but the name of the Lord has been a strong tower, into which they have ran and found relief. They have been weary and discouraged by temptation, but in waiting upon the Lord they have renewed their strength. They have been dark and desolate—but the appearance of Goodwill, to open the gate, has been like beamings from the uncreated glory, or the arising of the sun of righteousness with his outstretched and healing wings. So true is it as Cowper says:—

"When one that holds communion with the skies,
Has filled his urn where purest waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings;
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
And tells us whence his treasures are supplied."

Crewkerne. S. P.

(To be continued).

THE CLOUD.

FROM THE GERMAN.

One hot morning in summer there arose from the sea a tiny little cloud. Lightly and cheerfully, like a blooming, playful child, it moved through the blue heavens, and over the wide earth which, after a long drought, lay parched and dreary.

As it floated along it saw the poor men below labouring in the sweat of their brows, and full of care, exhausting themselves, while it knew nothing of anxiety or weariness, being moved along by the light morning breath of the pure air.

"Ah!" it said, "could I only do something to lighten the burdens of those poor men, to relieve their weariness, to remove their sorrows, to provide nourishment for the hungry, and refreshment for the thirsty!"

The day advanced and the cloud grew larger, and its desire to devote itself to men, continually became stronger.

But upon the earth it gradually became hotter. The sun shone forth with burning heat and heavily oppressed the toilers; they were almost fainting, but still they must work for they were very poor. Then they threw up toward the cloud an imploring glance as if they would say, "Ah, thou canst help us!"

"Yes, I will help you!" said the cloud, and it immediately began to descend gently towards the earth.

But now occurred to it what it had heard when it was a child and dwelt in the bosom of the sea, namely, that if a cloud descended to the earth it would be overtaken by death.

Under the influence of this thought it wavered in its purpose and permitted itself to be driven hither and thither. At length, however, it stood still and said boldly and joyfully, "I will help you, come what will!"

With this resolution it suddenly became as big as a giant, and strong, and powerful also. It had never supposed itself capable of such greatness. Like a benevolent Deity it stood there above the earth, and raised its head and spread its wings over the fields. It became so conspicuous that men and beasts were alarmed, and trees and grass bowed before it, but all hoped that it would prove a benefactor.

"Yes, I will help you?" it exclaimed again. "Receive me; I die for you!"

A powerful will inspired it, an intense light flashed through it, a loud voice escaped it, and possessed by undying love it approached the earth and dissolved in showers of blessings. This was its deed, and this was its death, and by death it was glorified.

O'er the whole land as far as the rain shed itself, there arose a shining coloured bow formed of heavens purest rays. It was the last visible salutation of self sacrificing love.

This however soon vanished but the blessings realised by the delivered workers remained long after.

J. J.

Fragments and Choice Sayings.

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

Anecdote of the Rev. John Ryland.

The Rev. John Ryland, of Northampton, a man who was in advance of the age in which he lived, was accustomed to print and circulate tracts long previously to the existence of the Religious Tract Society. To help in defraying the expenses of this work, he would sometimes appeal to the liberality of others. On one occasion, he called on his friend Mr. Dupont, at the Castle and Falcon, in London, and finding that a clergyman of respectability was there, asked to be introduced to him.

"Sir," said Mr. Ryland, "I print and distribute tracts on religious sub-

jects, at an expense above my own means, and, understanding you are a clergyman, and of course that you take an interest in the improvement of the ignorant and poor, I have waited upon you to solicit a contribution." "I know," replied the clergyman, "nothing about tracts; I take no interest in such improvements."

"Pray, sir, have you a parish?"

"To be sure I have. I am rector of a parish containing two thousand souls."

Mr. Ryland, with great promptness and devoutness, fell on his knees, in the presence of the clergyman, and poured forth a fervent prayer, that God would have mercy on the two thousand souls, whose shepherd declared that he cared not for their improvement and salvation; and especially that he would open the eyes of their shepherd. Rising he left the room—the clergyman standing in utter consternation.

"Dupont," inquired the clergyman, when a little recovered, "what madman was that you sent up to my room?"

"Sir," was Mr. Dupont's answer, "he is no madman; but one of the most respectable ministers of Christ in the kingdom; and, if you will but go to Jewin-street Chapel this evening, and hear him preach, take my word, you will no more think him insane."

"Well," said the clergyman, "I will go, for I never saw or heard anything like his conversation and prayer in my life; but I am sure he is mad!"

He went to the chapel, and was much struck with Mr. Ryland's preaching; and on the following Sabbath heard him again at Spa Fields. God blessed the word; the clergyman wept like a child, conversed with Mr. Dupont, heard Mr. Ryland as often as he could, and left a sum of money for tracts; returned to his parish a different man, and became extremely useful to many of the two thousand souls for whom before he had cherished no concern.

This anecdote was related by Mr. Bound, of Cheshunt, who knew and loved both Mr. Ryland and Mr. Dupont, to a friend by whom it was lately told to a grandson of Mr. Ryland.

Another grandson, with sentiments of deep and affectionate veneration for his ancestor, communicated this anecdote to a periodical, in the hope that such an example of Christian fidelity and zeal may "provoke to emulation" many others and thus produce fresh illustrations of the saying of the sacred volume, "A word spoken in due season, how good is it!" (Prov. xv. 23).

REAL GOOD FROM SEEMING EVIL.

I READ in a history of the Burmese mission, that about thirty years ago, in the town of Ava, a small congregation of native Christians was collected by the efforts of a devoted missionary, one of whom was a young Burmese of superior rank. His sister, a maid of honour to the queen of the country, was greatly distressed at his forsaking the faith of his fathers. She used every persuasion to induce him to change his views, and finding all her entreaties were vain, she supposed this must be owing to the missionary's influence, and that her best plan would be to get him removed from his dangerous associates. At a distance from them, she doubted not, he would soon forget these new fancies and doctrines. So she made application to the queen, and obtained for the young man an appointment as governor in the district of Bassein, five hundred miles from Ava. It was an honourable office, and I suppose he had no alternative but to accept it; yet his heart sunk at the prospect of leaving his Christian brethren, and going far away to a land of heathen strangers.

He sorrowfully went, and had hardly entered upon his official duties, when his officials brought before him some men of the Karen tribes whom they had caught in the jungles, and accused of worshipping a strange god. "What God?" he asked. "They call him the eternal God," was the reply. After asking a few more questions, he commanded the prisoners to be dismissed unmolested, to the great surprise of all present. Very soon it became known that the governor was not only willing to tolerate the new religious sect, but was himself one of them. During the two years

that he remained at Bassein he was like a "nursing father" to the infant church, and before he left, there were in the district two thousand converts! Surely, he was the right man in the right place after all, though when he went to it he was ready to say with Jacob, "All these things are against me."

WHY EVERYBODY IS CROSS.

"Oh, Mary," said a little boy named John to his sister, "I have found a pretty thing. It is a piece of red glass, and when I look through it, everything looks red too. The trees, the houses, the green grass, your face, and everything is red."

"It is very beautiful," Mary replied: "would you like me to tell you how to learn a useful lesson from it?"

"You remember the other day you thought everybody very cross with you. Now, you were like this piece of glass, which makes every thing red *because it is red*. You were cross, so you thought everybody about you cross too.

"If you are in a good humour, and kind to every one, all will seem kind to you. Try if they will not."

A FRAGMENT.

I saw a pale mourner stand bending over the tomb, and his tears fell fast and often. As he raised his humid eyes to heaven, he cried—

"My brother! oh, my brother!"

A sage passed that way and said—

"For whom dost thou mourn?"

"One," replied he, "Whom I did not sufficiently love while living; but whose inestimable worth I now feel."

"What wouldst thou do, if he were restored to thee?"

The mourner replied that he would never offend him by an unkind word, but would take every occasion to show his friendship, if he could come back to his fond embrace.

"Then waste not thy time in useless grief," said the sage, "but if thou hast friends go and cherish the living, remembering that they will one day be dead also."

Poetry.

LYRICS FOR THE HEART.—"THE VICTORY OF THE CHURCH."

BY W. POOLE BALFERN.

"And they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb."—Rev. xii. 11.

'Tis by the blood which Jesus shed,
His saints though feeble victory gain;
'Tis by his word their faith is fed,
His changeless love their hearts sustain.

'Tis by His strength they shall prevail,
Firm grasped by His Almighty hand,
When earth's old pillars reel and fail,
Still built on Him His church shall stand.

Nor Satan's schemes nor fiercest ire,
Nor persecutor's floods though deep,
Shall e'er put out that living fire
His love will feed and wisely keep.

The love by which He overcame,
Stained with His blood the path he trod;
Lives in His saints an heavenly flame,
And upward soars and tends to God.

His covenant love, a mighty cord,
Secures that church men often spurn;
Nor dungeon, fagot, flame, or sword,
Can cut or make its fibres burn.

Vain is the rage and spite of men,
To sever Jesus and His bride;
No cruel beast nor lion's den,
Shall e'er remove her from His side.

Cleansed from all sin she must appear,
And spotless see His Father's face;
Triumphant, happy, free from fear,
She shall extol His matchless grace.

The weakest saint that ever cried
One feeble, broken, heartfelt prayer;
"Beneath thy cross O let me hide—"
Shall be for ever sheltered there.

Page for the Young.

A YOUTH'S ESSAY ON HEROISM.

THE great aim of every boy's life is, or ought to be, to *be* a hero. *Who* is there who has not felt his heart burn within him, as he has read the history of those noble patriots, who at different stages of the world's history, have stood forth as the saviours of their countries, or benefactors of *mankind in general!* To emulate these glorious deeds becomes the aim of many, while their hearts are still warm with the generous blood of youth, and before a closer contact with the world and its selfish maxims, has seared their souls, and rendered them callous to these ennobling impressions. But not everyone can be a patriot in this manner, nor can everyone be a soldier with the lasting fame of a Vicars or a Havelock; and so, many youthful aspirants to the honours of heroism feel discouraged and perhaps give up the chase altogether. It shall be our aim in the following essay to point out a few heroes who appear to be the greatest, and to direct one in his pursuit of like honour. Most of the heroes of ancient history are of such a bloodthirsty character, that it is with positive relief we turn away from the contemplation of Achilles or other warriors of his stamp, and pause to admire the spectacle presented to us, in that grand old Titan Prometheus—chained to a rock, in the midst of a lone howling wilderness, the vulture ever gnawing his vitals, the thunder of Zeus crashing around him, he was still fearless and undaunted. Resolved to endure these torments for ever, rather than submit to the unjust tyrant who had caused him to be bound there, he consoled himself by thinking of the innumerable benefits he had bestowed upon mankind, and refused with scorn all offers of release brought him by Hermes on condition of submitting to Zeus.

That man, or demigod, as you may call him, was indeed a hero. Perfect fearlessness, combined with the highest sense of what was right; a perception of the innate beauty of truth and purity, and an abhorrence of all cowardly submitting to evil, were the chief characteristics of the Titan Prometheus, and it was the possession of these qualities that made him a hero.

The same noble disregard of danger when doing right, and the same scorn of doing wrong, each may have; and if all his acts are done under the influence of these principles, he who thus acts is a hero in the highest sense of the word. We may not fancy either that this moral courage is incompatible with the highest degree of bravery in the field of battle, as the instances of General Havelock and Hedley Vicars sufficiently prove. And if, as it was in their cases, this moral and physical courage be joined to a real and manly Christianity, *a degree of heroism is reached before which, even that of Prometheus pales.*

And it is a certain fact that heroism of this kind is far more difficult to attain, than that species of reckless daring, which when displayed in

battle, or at sea, or in any other great danger, brings such honour to its possessors. It is far easier to face death itself, than to face those cruel gibes and taunts, which are sure to be the portion of him who endeavours to act up to the great principles laid down for his guidance.

Heroism may be defined as "combining courage in ALL its forms," and he who possesses this courage, he, and and he alone deserves the name of—hero.

JOHN OWEN STOCK.

WHAT A BOY CAN DO.

"EVEN a child is known by *his doings*," says Solomon, "whether his work be pure, and whether it be right." An instance of the *right-doing* of a boy came to my knowledge lately, which I thought it would be well for other young people to hear of; that, according to their influence and opportunity, they might go and do likewise.

Little Jack was the son of the captain of an English merchant ship. I never heard of his mother, but I feel sure she trained her dear boy up in the way he should go. For if a sailor's child has not a good mother, he is placed at a great disadvantage. His father is necessarily so often, and so long absent, that he cannot do much for him. I take it for granted that Jack's mother taught him early to read his Bible, and pray to God for a new heart, and that her example was a holy and useful one; the following history will tell you why.

Sailors are often very tender, loving fellows. Jack's father was so; and, in his short visits home with his family, his little son so won upon his heart, that, when he was old enough to leave his mother with safety, he took him a voyage for the sake of his company, as well as to give him an early insight into his future calling. Jack, accustomed to a quiet, godly home, was often shocked by the manners and language of his father's crew; and he thought again and again what could be done to improve them. He felt that a little boy could not say much that would influence rough men, and then he wished he had something to give them to read in their spare moments; so that on the Sabbath they might remember their Creator, and recognise His power, love, and care over them on the mighty deep. At last Jack came to the conclusion that the only thing *he* could do, likely to be useful, was to save up carefully the pocket-money his father allowed him on the voyage, and, instead of spending it when in port, on fruit, or other things, to keep it till he returned to England. He would thus have a little stock to lay out on good books for the crew in the next voyage. This good thought did not originate in Jack's natural heart. Who put it there, and enabled him to carry it out, and act upon it? One who if we ask Him, "will cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit," and fill us with desires to glorify His holy name.

Jack arrived in England, and the store of money was expended in the purchase of religious periodicals for the next voyage. Amongst them was a volume published by the Tract Society of London. It so fell out, in the providence of God, that one of the passengers on the next voyage was an officer in the navy, who was on his way to the Island of Ascension, to take command of one of her Majesty's vessels in the Chinese Archipelago. Though he was a man of rank, refinement, and amiability, he knew not God, except by the hearing of the ear. He was, perhaps, first impressed by the boy missionary's lending out his little library to the crew. However this might be, in a vacant hour, to wile away the tediousness of the voyage, he took up the volume just mentioned, and began to read it. I do not know what it was, but something arrested his attention, and brought him almost at once to the foot of the Cross. He felt he had hitherto lived in vain, and determined, the Lord being his helper, to do something for Him who had given His dear Son to die for his sins. He asked the captain of the vessel (Jack's father) to allow him to have a daily reading with the men. This was readily granted. Prayer and praise, and the reading of God's Holy Word,

were now to be heard daily on board. A special Sabbath-service, also, was conducted by the navy officer. Was not Jack's heart glad when he saw his effort to do good thus signally honoured? This gentleman carried on the same work in his own ship when he reached it; and, by means of his knowledge of colloquial Chinese, he was able to speak a word for his Master, in their own language, to the poor Chinamen.

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

"JESUS WILL GO WITH ME."

A little girl four years old grew ill. One day when her father was sitting beside her little bed, she turned to him with the question:

"Papa, does the doctor think I shall die?"

Her father, with a very sad heart, told his little girl the truth. Then her pale face grew very sad, and she mused awhile on the dark graves she had sometimes looked down into where the people were buried.

"Papa," she said tearfully, "the grave looks very dark. O, it is very dark indeed! Papa, wont you go down with me into it?"

That strong arm she had been accustomed to lean on seemed to her a safeguard in every hour of dread and danger.

With a bursting heart her father told her he could not go with her till the Lord called him.

"Papa, won't you let mamma go with me?"

If she could nestle close in that loving bosom, and feel those loving arms around her, the grave would lose its gloom. The same answer almost broke the father's heart to give. She turned her face to the wall and wept. The dear lamb had been taught of Jesus, and she poured her heart out to him with a child's full faith. Soon she looked up with a joy-lighted face, and said:

"Papa, the grave is not dark now. Jesus will go with me."

Reviews.

The Complete Works of George Swinnock, M.A. Vol. I. Containing: The Christian Man's Calling. Part I., and a portion of Part II. Imperial 8vo. Pp. 528. Edinburgh: James Nichol. London: James Nisbet and Co. Dublin: G. Herbert.

THIS is the first volume of the third year's issue of the second section of Nichol's Series of Standard Divines. The third year's issue will consist of George Swinnock's complete works, in five superbly got up volumes, the last appearing on the the 1st. October. The Subscription price for these five volumes is only One Guinea, prepaid, or rather more than 4s. 2d. per volume. How they are produced for the money we cannot tell. When we consider the intrinsic worth of the contents, the splendid style of the paper, printing, and binding, and the careful manner of the editing, we have no hesitation in pronouncing Mr. Nichol's enterprise the greatest publishing marvel of the age. Then, too, when Ritualism is drifting in the direction of Popery, and Broad Churchism is moving in the direction of infidelity, it is an invaluable counteractive to both forms of error to have the writings of such men as George Swinnock reproduced in an attractive form. Mr. Nichol is subordinating his high position as a publisher to the advancement of the best interests of his race, of God's truth, and of the kingdom of Christ in the world.

A Memoir of Swinnock is to appear in a subsequent volume. The treatise before us is founded upon 1 Tim. iv. 7. It is dedicated first to Richard Hampden, of Hampden, Bucks., and to Lætitia Hampden, his virtuous consort; and, secondly, to the people of the Parish of Great-Kimbal, Bucks., to the incumbency of which living Swinnock appears to have been presen-

ted by "his honoured patron, Richard Hampden."

Swinnock's works have already been regarded by lovers of Puritan literature as singularly rich in their admirable applications of the great truths of the gospel to daily life and practice. They have, for a considerable period, been difficult to procure, and always bring high prices. The late Dr. James Hamilton says in his Christian classics "Except to a few collectors, the writings of Swinnock are almost unknown; but few books are more fitted to keep the attention awake, and few so richly reward it." A uniform edition of his works does not exist, and has long been a felt desideratum. And here we have the first volume of *such* a complete edition as would have made the good old Puritan's heart leap for joy. In conclusion, we will say that George Swinnock is, in every respect, worthy to take his place by the side of Sibbes and Brooks, and the other worthies of their age. Henceforth no theological library will be complete without Nichol's edition of Swinnock's complete works.

Smith, Pierson, and Gouge, on Psalms i, xxvii, lxxiv, lxxxv, lxxxvii, cxvi. Crown 4to. James Nichol, &c.

THIS is the third and concluding volume of the Fourth year's issue of Nichol's Quarto Series of Commentaries. We are glad to see that the previous issues may be had at the subscription price. *Each series of three magnificent volumes may be obtained for* 16*s.* 0*d.*; *or in separate volumes at* 7*s. each.* The four issues now complete are as follows:—

First Year's Issue.

I. Airay on Philippians, and Cartwright on Colossians.

II. King on Jonah, and Rainolds on Obadiah and Haggai.

III. Stock and Torshell on Malachi, and Bernard and Fuller on Ruth.

Second Year's Issue.

I. Hardy on First John.

II. Marbury on Habakkuk and Obadiah.

III. Bayne on the Ephesians.

Third Year's Issue.

Gouge on the Hebrews, in three volumes.

Fourth Year's Issue.

I. George Newton on the 17th Chapter of John.

II. Burroughs on the Beatitudes, and Rogers on Isaiah v. 1—7.

III. Smith, Pierson, and Gouge on the Psalms.

The following admirable and very scarce works will form the fifth year's issue, and will appear in the order given.

On First June, 1868.

John Cotton on Ecclesiastes.

John Cotton on Canticles.

P. Muffet on Proverbs.

On First October, 1868.

Thomas Jacomb, D.D., on Romans viii.

William Sclater on Romans i—iii.

On First February, 1869.

Nicholas Byfield on Colossians.

Now the readers of the *Primitive Church Magazine* are known to be devoted lovers of the old Puritan theology; and if this list does not whet their appetites, and make them eager for the appearance of the volumes, we shall be deceived. The Standard Divines is a noble series, but the Quarto Series of Commentaries is, if possible, even more valuable. The direct exposition of large portions of Holy Scripture, must be the most *helpful* of theological literature. And for spiritual insight into the meaning of the Divine Word, the Puritan commentators are preëminent. Some of their learning may be rather antiquated; much of their criticism may be now superseded by the advance of philological and hermeneutical science; but for large-souled knowledge of the verities of God, commend us to their pages. It is a noble testimony to their undying power as expounders of God's truth that, after two centuries, their works should be reappearing in the noble form in which Mr. Nichol presents them to the public.

The Philosophy of Revivals. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C. Cloth. Pp. 150.

THIS is in reality a treatise on conversion. With an immense deal that it contains we cordially agree. Its

descriptions of what conversion is are scriptural and forcible. The great change is set forth in a style of which all evangelical Christians will approve. But when the author comes to speak of the manner in which the great change is wrought, and controverts the views held by the advocates of sovereign grace in the regeneration of the soul, he propounds sentiments from which we utterly dissent.

It is quite true that "evangelical conversion is an intelligent and voluntary turning from self-interest as the ultimate end of life to the supreme love and service of God by faith in Christ Jesus:" (P. 7), that "God does not force men to be converted, as the steam forces the locomotive; but wins them by persuasion, as the loving parent wins the obedient child;" (P. 9), and that "revealed truth is the divinely appointed, the well-adjusted, and the necessary instrument in an evangelical conversion." (P. 53). But man is not by nature, this author being witness, "*an obedient child*," but a perverse and rebellious one. It is perfectly true that any man can come to God in Christ whenever he chooses to come, but it is equally certain that no man will really choose to come until he is made willing in the day of Jehovah's power. In the statement that, any man can be converted whenever he will, there is a *suppressio veri*; for no man will will to be converted until "God worketh in him both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Conversion is the rectification of a will which is naturally and incurably evil. No man is converted against his will, for conversion is a change of will by a gracious and sovereign power. Converted sinners freely and intelligently choose Christ; for God will not have *slaves* for His servants and children; but they make this choice under a supernatural agency which man can neither control nor command.

Our Author says—"The cause of the change lies within the power of the will" (P. 38). This language is unphilosophical, and is especially objectionable in a book entitled "The Philosophy of Revivals." The will is simply a faculty, and has no separate or independent power at all. It is the man willing, or possessed of the faculty of willing. It always acts as it is acted upon by the understanding and heart, and will ever choose what is to it at the time the greatest apparent good. Now, as in an unrenewed man the will is ever acted upon by a depraved nature and is itself depraved, its volitions will ever be, (until a divine power changes it), evil. Mr. Maynard is very strong in his witness to the depravity of man's nature. According to him—"Sin spreads clouds of darkness over the sinner's understanding, *perverts his will*, sears his conscience," &c. (P. 12). "Whilst unconverted every man is supremely selfish. All his moral actions spring from earthly motives. The principles which govern his life are all rooted in things below. He refuses to submit to the authority of God. Hence, his life is a scene of rebellion against his Creator. *Conversion implies a radical change in the attitude of the sinner's will*" (P. 15). Now, this witness is true, and being true, completely upsets the Arminian view of conversion. For it is manifest that an external and divine influence must be brought to bear upon such a nature to produce the result which is called conversion. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."

Mr Maynard utterly misrepresents the view held concerning conversion by intelligent advocates of sovereign grace. Who holds that when a sinner is effectually called by divine mercy he must come "*whether he will or not!*" (P. 137). When a man is effectually called he is made willing to come; in fact, this very willingness is the intended fruit of effectual calling; and is conversion.

Again, Mr. Maynard denies that "the initial step in the salvation of an individual is taken without his knowledge and consent" (p. 66). Yet he says in another place,—"the primary cause of evangelical conversion is the unmerited love of God manifested in the gift of his dear Son" (P. 63). The apostolical testimony, too, is decisive. "By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that

not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." The responsibility of man is not affected by the depravity of the disposition of his mind, however malignant that depravity may be. In fact, the more perverse the heart, the greater the man's sin.

Mr. Maynard, in common with most men of his theological views fails to distinguish between the gracious and sovereign influence by which men are converted, and conversion itself. The putting forth of that influence is from first to last a divine act; but its effect is that the man on whom it is exerted freely chooses Christ as his Saviour and his portion.

Again, our author speaks of "the Holy Spirit as applying the truth with force upon the sinner's conscience" (P. 20). Such modes of speech are, however, not strictly in accordance with fact. In the application of truth to the soul no change is wrought in the truth itself, for God's word is ever the same, and in the nature of things, must remain so. The change wrought is not in the word, but in the man's views and feelings concerning it. No greater glory is put into the truth: but the eyes of our understanding are opened to see the glory already and always there; and the state of our feelings with regard to the truth is changed. It is we who are converted, not the eternal and unalterable truth of God. This is obvious. The Spirit works upon the sinner, and opens his heart to receive the truth, and to appreciate its real glory.

We have gone somewhat at length into these matters, for the times are critical, and demand the vigorous assertion of the great doctrines of sovereign grace, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Mr. Maynard has written in a good spirit, and with the important exceptions above indicated we thank him for his earnest little treatise on man's conversion to God.

The Sunday Scholar's Annual. Third Series. London: Elliot Stock. Crimson cloth. Gilt edged. Pp. 146.

THIS volume is the best of the series. It is full of interest. We cordially recommend it to all the young people who speak the English language. The little folks who once get hold of it are sure to read it through many times.

The Baptist Hand-book for 1868, published under the direction of the BAPTIST UNION of GREAT BRITIAN and IRELAND. Price Eightpence. London: Elliot Stock. Pp. 184.

WE gladly welcome this new number of our old friend the Baptist Handbook. The numbers each year seem to grow in excellence and fulness. No Baptist should be without this manual of his own denomination. Our American friends are a head of us in many things, but we beat them at least in two respects; they have not yet learned the lesson of Free Trade, and they have no Baptist Hand-book.

Priest and Pastor: A word in Season. London: Elliot Stock. Pp. 16.

TRULY a word in season, proving in an able and scholarly way that "not one of the apostles or evangelists is in the Bible called a bishop; and that there is not in the Scripture the least countenance for the modern office of "bishop," much less of archbishop. It is entirely of man's devising" (P. 9.) This, however, is admitted by all the most enlightened Episcopalian divines. Take as a sample Dr. Henry Alford, the learned and candid Dean of Canterbury. In his comment on the *Presbuterous* of Acts xi. 30 he says, "These were the overseers or presidents of the congregation,—an office borrowed from the synagogues, and established by the apostles in the churches generally (See Acts xiv. 23). They are in the New Testament identical with the *episcopoi* (See Acts xx. 27, 28; Titus i. 5, 7; 1 Peter v. 1, 2). The title *episcopos*, as applied to one person superior to the *Presbuteroi*, and answering to our *bishop*, appears to have been unknown in the apostolic times" (Alford's Greek New Testament). A candid admission, truly, for an episcopal Dean to make! We leave the smaller fry of Episcopalian advocates to settle accounts with Dr.

Henry Alford. The author of Priest and Pastor might advantageously append the above passage which we have quoted from the Dean, to the next edition of his capital tract.

The Free Churchman and Christian Spectator. Price One Shilling. London: Elliot Stock. Nos. for January and February.

WERE we not "Strict" Baptists, we should be Free Churchmen. The brethren who admit the unbaptised to church ordinances, but deny them church membership, are inconsistent both with themselves, and with the New Testament. The Free Churchmen who admit the unbaptised to all the rights of church membership are consistent with themselves, but inconsistent with the New Testament. But the "Strict" Baptists who require baptism, the appointed badge of Christian discipleship, as a pre-requisite to both church membership and church ordinances, are consistent both with the New Testament and with themselves.

If we should drift from our present moorings, we should cast anchor in the bay of Free Churchism. But that is not very likely.

The "Free Churchman" is an able expositor of the views that it advocates. We read it with interest as the organ of what is called the advanced school of liberal thought among the Nonconformists. We vastly prefer it to "The Homilist. It is altogether more spiritual, more reverential, and more orthodox in its tone. On public and ecclesiastical affairs it gives the clear ring of a sound liberalism, while all the articles indicate careful thought and ripe culture in the writers.

Sermon Thoughts: Analysing and Illustrating Bible Texts, in Sketches and Brief Discourses. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C. Cloth. Pp. 208.

THESE thoughts are the substance of so many sermons, preached by the author to his own congregation, on Sabbaths and at Week night services during 1867. They are published in the hope that they may provoke other thoughts—nobler, devouter, and worthier such themes.

We have looked over these thoughts with deep interest. They are thoroughly evangelical in tone, but not decidedly Calvinistic in theology. Many of them are marked by a certain degree of freshness, and are above the average of the sermonising of the day. One matter of taste we must refer to. We are sorry to see that the author has fallen into an imitation of Henry Ward Beecher's habit of likening any great sorrow of ours to the Saviour's agony in Gethsemane. "But when the *Gethsemane* is around, what can give you resignation to take the cup?" (P. 2). Surely, this approximates to irreverence. However, we cordially commend the book as thoughtful and suggestive.

My First White Hair. A Story for Children. Translated from the German of Thekla Von Gumpert, by A. Sturges. London: Elliot Stock. Pp. 84.

THIS is one of the sweetest stories we ever read; most touching, and most beautiful.

The Children's Saviour. A Sermon to Children. By Rev. H. B. Cooke. London: Elliot Stock. Pp. 84.

A VERY simple but clear and forcible presentation of the Saviour Jesus, to the young.

The Character of Joseph. A Lecture to the Young. By Rev. Edward Russell. London: Elliot Stock. Pp. 32.

THIS is a sensible and judicious treatment of an old theme, enlivened by some striking facts. It should be extensively circulated among the young.

We have great pleasure in drawing attention to two excellent little publications by our brother T. W. MEDHURST, of Glasgow; which are to be had of George Gallie, Buchanan Street, Glasgow.

THE first, *Romanism not Christianity, but a Satanic Delusion.* This is a vigorous onslaught upon the essentials of the Papal system. Its price is, only twopence, but it is

weighty and conclusive in its reasonings.

The second is entitled, *Lost or Saved?* A question for the New Year. It is however suited to every day of the year, being an earnest appeal to every man's conscience.

We have also received the reports of brother Medhurst's church for 1867, and rejoice in all the success that the Lord is giving him.

The Hive for February, (Elliot Stock) is quite up to the mark of the opening number. This magazine is sure to become a favourite with our Sunday school teachers. It is in reality an admirable little serial, and can scarcely be commended too highly.

The Scattered Nation for January and February, (Elliot Stock) is as usual solid and weighty. *The Church* for January and February, (Elliot Stock) is full of interest, and is a first class pennyworth of good reading; while *Old Jonathan* (Collingridge) is as fresh and popular as ever.

We have also received, and cordially commend the following:—

The Gospel Magazine for February. W. H. Collingridge, Aldersgate-street, London. Price Sixpence.

The Christian Times for Friday, January 31st, 1868; with a splendid likeness of Christmas Evans. Price One Penny. Partridge and Co., 9, Paternoster-row, London.

The Sower, and *The Little Gleaner*. Both for February. One Penny each. Houlston and Wright, Paternoster-row, London.

Intelligence.

SAXONY.

My dear brother Howe.—It is not only my duty, but also my pleasure now to answer your encouraging letter of October last. But since I kept you waiting so long I first of all must beg your pardon. It was just on the day I went on a preaching tour to the East of Prussia when I received your letter, and after my return from that tour I was with heart and head and hands and feet so much engaged as if I had to make up for the long time of my absence. Again, it is a fact that we always keep the longest waiting those friends whom we know are the most forbearing; I question if it is right, but it is natural.

I greatly rejoiced as I saw from your letter that you and all our Saxon friends in England—as I might call them — who once commenced the Saxon mission, are keeping up without declension their friendship and interest towards Saxony and its evangelisation. The good work in Saxony has been of late rather slowly, but still steadily proceeding. The churches enjoyed peace, as well as "fellowship of the spirit," and we have had conversions of sinners, but only one by one, and we pray for what we greatly desire —an *outpouring* of the Holy Spirit, the chief agent in Christ's kingdom, the great lever that will turn the world upside down, and the only source of every blessing and success. I therefore considered our daily *prayer* meetings for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to the extension of Christ's kingdom, which meetings were held on all our stations during the first week of the new year, as our most important meetings, and from which we will have to expect most of all. But we feel that whilst we have first of all and most of all to pray, we have also to set to work, to do all we can to use all lawful means and leave even no stone unturned that our great aim—the glorification of Christ Jesus in the salvation of sinners—may be reached. Therefore I proposed to the churches here that they should after each of those prayer meetings try to answer the question: "What can and should be done by us towards the extension of Christ's kingdom?" The question was discussed with pleasure, and various were the answers, so that each member got convinced that much can be done by individual activity, and that there is work for every member; if it cannot do the one

thing, it sees that there are other things it can do. To mention one thing as a specimen, it was also said that the members should not be so cold and indifferent—had almost said so Scotch like—but kind and friendly towards all the strangers that come into the meeting, so that they may be drawn by the cords of our love. Now this is something which can and should be exercised by *every* member of the church. And oh, the power of love! the power of wisdom, eloquence, persuasion, &c., does not come up to it.

Besides this we also felt the want of *labourers;* the Saxon field which comprises with the provinces and the various duchies a large territory and about six millions of souls is too large for one person, and we agreed to ask the Lord to send us at least one of his servants; in the same time I prepared a list of the members for subscriptions to his support; and though the members here may be only able to raise the half or a part of the necessary salary, we trust that, if first the Lord blesses us with the right man, he will not withhold the needful means, and give it our English friends into their hearts to prove their world known generosity in helping us.

Having returned in the middle of December last from the East of Prussia, I first spent a Sabbath here in Halle to preach twice, teach the school, and hold a church meeting in which we received a young convert, a boy of thirteen years. On the so-called Christmas Day I held the annual examination of our Sunday school. It was an interesting afternoon, many of the members and friends were present, and the children answered all the questions most satisfactorily; after they had also sung several hymns, and heard the interesting address of an American brother, Professor Winters, who was with us, they were presented with little presents. Allow me to remark by the way that I find increasingly that Sunday schools will be attended with much more pleasure and by a greater number of children, if they are conducted in a lively manner, and if we have good and much singing. Let them have childlike and lively songs.

The last Sunday of the year I was in Meerane in the kingdom of Saxony. Here the police had a few weeks before dissolved again the meetings of our members, but they resumed them again. We expected the policemen also this day, because we had some large meetings, in which I preached "God's love and deeds," and just to this must be ascribed and added now that our enemies have left us undisturbed. We also had the joy to receive here into membership a penitent backslider, a man who was immersed many years ago in the north of Germany, but had lost himself again into the world, and now had become acquainted with us by the fact that the police dissolved our meetings in Zwickan last autumn; he confessed with tears his backslidings and had proved already by a steady walk that he had given himself over again to the Lord Jesus.

From M. I went to Altenburg, where we also had the joy to hear in a church meeting a young convert telling how great things the Lord had done unto him: he was most gladly received and immersed in the name of the Lord, in the midst of the severe cold which we have had of late here. I preached twice here to well attended meetings and held two Bible classes. Next to this I went to Löbejün and so on, visiting the stations nearly all, and preaching everywhere.

Last Sunday I was again in Halle where I preached in the forenoon on "the journey of Israel; the Israel according to the flesh and the Israel according to the spirit," taught the school, preached in the afternoon the sermon of Peter at Cesarea (Acts x. 34—43), and held a church meeting to hear another young convert, who will be baptised in a few days. It may be interesting to you to hear that this last convert is the brother of my young wife, with which the Lord blessed me not long ago, as a compensation for my lost one. Let me draw your attention, however, to the fact that, the most of the conversions here, as also now I had to relate, are conversions of *young* folks. Now should not this be a shuddering thought for the old, and an admonition for the

young to seek the Lord whilst they are young.

Whilst we rejoice that, as you see, the Lord has been with us, we would ascribe unto him all honour and praise, desiring that he may in future "in his majesty ride prosperously because of (in behalf of) truth and meekness and righteousness!"

Commending my poor self and the cause of our great Lord to your prayers, I remain, your sincere friend,

MORITZ GEISSLER.

Halle, February 8th, 1868.

GOSPEL OAK FIELDS, BAPTIST CHURCH, ALBERT HALL, MALDEN ROAD, LONDON.

A PUBLIC meeting was held in the above place of worship on the 13th of January, to inaugurate the labours of the new year. The pastor of the church, Rev. James Webb, late of Ipswich, presided; and interesting and appropriate addresses were delivered by Rev. J. T. Wigner, Rev. Dawson Burns, and H. C. Banister, Esq. Mr. Wigner cordially welcomed his esteemed friend Mr. Webb to London, whither he had himself lately removed from Lynn, and trusted that he might find the sphere of labour on which he had entered for a time so blessed as to warrant his occupying it for many years to come. Mr. Burns who, as president of the Temperance Society, for which Albert Hall was at first erected, is well known in the church and neighbourhood, made an excellent speech on the importance of thorough boldness in the assertion not only of the vital doctrines of the gospel, but also of those distinctive truths, which we as Baptists hold to be important parts of the revealed will of God. Mr. Banister congratulated the church (to whom he had frequently preached with much acceptance while they were without a pastor), on their altered circumstances, and urged them to rally round Mr. Webb with a determination to do all in their power to strengthen his hands and encourage his heart in the work. Mr. Wilkin, on behalf of the church and congregation, presented a handsome Harmonium to Mr. G. P. Coles, who ever since their entrance into the present building, has most kindly acted as gratuitous organist, attending without a single omission, all the Sabbath services, and also for a long period was superintendent of the Sunday school. Mr. Coles acknowledged the present with much feeling in an appropriate speech.

FAMINE IN EAST PRUSSIA.

SAD accounts have been received from our missionaries in East Prussia. They, with many of the members of their churches, are suffering grievously; and, as most of the aid sent from this country passes through the hands of the State-Church Clergy, they are frequently precluded from sharing it. Baptists are, therefore, earnestly entreated to send their contributions through Rev. J. G. Oncken, Hamburg, care of Martin H. Wilkin, Hampstead, London, N.W.

BAPTISMS.

ZION CHAPEL, BACUP.—On the last Lord's Day, in the last year; three young females from the Sabbath school, and one aged female from the congregation, were baptised by Mr. Ash, of Staleybridge; and on the second Sabbath of this year, were received into the church by Mr. Dawson, of Liverpool. We thank God for these tokens of his goodness to us, He having not left us without witness.

CLOUGHFOLD.—January 8th, by the Rev. James Patterson; twelve, six males and six females.

KILMARNOCK. — March 1st, four; March 8th, two; by Mr. Stobo.

DEATHS.

RECENTLY, at the residence of her father, 12, Albert Road, Norbiton, Miss Myra Page. Her funeral sermon was preached on Lord's Day evening, February 3rd, in the Baptist chapel, New Malden, by the Rev. C. Woollacott from 1 Cor. xv. 55. At the close of the sermon Mr. Woollacott read a letter which he had received from the father of the deceased giving an account of her Christian experience. Mr. Page states "she was the subject of religious impressions from a child, which I pass over here.

For about four years before her death. She was afflicted with a complaint that baffled medical skill—a gradual decline. About the latter end of 1866, she appeared to be drawing near to her end. Her parents wishing to know the state of her mind put a few close questions in a very tender way, which evidently produced alarm by the answer—What, am I about to leave you? But then she did not wish to be troubled on the point. But the Lord was pleased to follow up the enquiry, for it produced deep concern in respect of her state as a sinner before him. And after awhile she was enabled to fly to the cross of Jesus for refuge. At that time one verse of the poet was a great comfort to her mind, and gave her great encouragement, namely—

'Rock of ages cleft for me,' &c.,

and also the lines of Newton—

'If I die with mercy sought,' &c.

The Lord shortly answered her petitions, for on the first morning of the year 1867, he brake in upon her soul with such a sense of his love to her, that the burden of all her sins was removed, and peace and joy flowed in like a river. The Lord did so graciously manifest his forgiving love—that, although the extraordinary joy did not continue, it left an assurance of her interest in the Lord Jesus to the last. We all thought the Lord was about to take her then, but she lingered on until the spring of 1867, and contrary to all our expectations she gained a little strength, and was favoured for a few times to go to the house of God. The first of the Lord's servants she heard was you sir, at Ebenezer chapel, Norbitan, on 'the priesthood of Christ,' and to use her own words she heard with new ears. Mr. Warren, of Kingston, was also much blessed to her soul, especially from the words 'Unto them that look for him shall he appear,' and at another time from 'Unto them that believe, he is precious.' But as the present winter drew on she gradually sunk back into her former state of weakness, and the complaint at times produced much irritability, which the Lord permitted to teach her what was in her heart. O how she would weep when the irritability was over, and the Lord visited her again with a sense of his dying love, as well as she was able she would then sing—

'Was it for crimes that I have done,
He groaned upon the tree,'

and other portions of similar hymns; the word of God also was her constant companion. Thus the Lord carried on his work in her soul and blessed her with much of his presence, which greatly supported her under the weakness which gradually increased. A month before the day of her decease she said to her mother after one of the fits before mentioned, 'Mother, the Lord is about to take me home, he has told me I have to be with him and behold his glory; he loves me too much to let me live in this state of sin.' The next day he told her aunt she was going to be with Jesus whom she loved, and from that time until her end she appeared as a bird on the wing, ready to fly away, and spake of her departure with pleasure. The fear of death appeared entirely taken away, and she would repeat the lines of the poet with composure.

'Death is no more a frightful foe,
Since I with Christ shall reign;
With joy I leave this world of woe,
For me to die is gain.'

And,—

'On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,
And cast a wishful eye
To Cannan's fair and happy land,
Where my possessions lie.'

The Lord, to use her own words, was very near to her. She often spake of his faithfulness. The day before her departure she said,—'If I am not able to speak at the last, I will now. I am going to heaven as a poor sinner saved by grace. Do not think of me when I am gone, as if I were in my poor afflicted body, but in that immortal one I shall have then.' At another time, her mother heard her say to herself,—'Oh, what a Saviour!' and she asked her,—'Has the Lord paid you another visit dear?' the answer was,—'*Marvellous*.' Her sufferings the day and night she departed were very great, so that she said but little. But a short time before her death she

looked at me and said, 'Rock of ages.' I repeated the lines, and said, 'You have found shelter there,' and she nodded assent, so that I understood her to mean on the Rock of ages. We have lost a most affectionate child, but we doubt not our loss is her eternal gain. I have passed over much that she said and experienced; but I believe that this is sufficient to show the manifestation of divine grace, and that is my only object."

January 16th.—Highly and deservedly respected, Sarah, the beloved wife of Mr. John Ashworth Lord, of Primrose Hill, Stacksteads, near Bacup, in the 30th year of her age, and was interred at the Baptist chapel, Lumb, Rossendale, January 22nd. The Revs. Abraham Nichols, of Sunnyside; J. G. Hall, of Bacup; and T. Vasey, of Lumb; officiating on the mournful occasion. "Her end was peace." On the same day, at the same hour and place, Sarah, the beloved wife of Mr. Richard Maden, of the Water Lumb, was interred in the 32nd year of her age. "One of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel." Each of these dear sisters in Christ, leaving a little one, without true maternal care; but the bereaved partners sorrow not as those who have no hope respecting the departed. "They are not lost, only gone before." On Lord's Day, January 25th, 1868, the Rev. T. Vasey improved the death of these dear friends, in connection with that of another member of the church, to a large congregation, from 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.; Mr. Nichols, of Sunnyside, conducting the devotional part.

RECEIVED FOR THE BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

By the TREASURER.	£	s.	d.
Rev. James Smith, Newmarket, (two years)	1	0	0
Mr. Allingham, Milton, 1867 and 1868.	1	0	0
Mr. Rogers, Peckham .....S.	0	10	6
Aberaychan.			
Henry Lewis, Esq .....S.	0	10	0
Thomas Lewis, Esq.....S.	0	5	0
Rev. T. Price.....S.	0	2	6
By MR. WHITEHEAD.			
Collection at Lyceum Chapel, Rochdale	2	4	8
Merthyr.			
William Harris, Esq. .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. John Price .....S.	0	5	0
Mrs. Isaac Jones .....S.	0	5	0
Several Friends.....	0	8	6
Aberdare.			
E. G. Price, Esq. .....S.	0	10	6
Ditto from Several Friends	0	11	0
Rev. Dr. Price .....S.	0	2	6
Rev. T. A. Pryce .....S.	0	2	6
Mr. R. Pardoe .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. William Thomas .....S.	0	5	0
Six Friends, 2/6 each	0	15	0
Haverford-West.			
William Rees, Esq. .....S.	2	2	0
William Davies, Esq .....S.	0	10	0
Joseph Thomas, Esq .....S.	0	10	0
John Lewis, Esq .....S.	0	5	0
Friends	0	7	0
Neath.			
Rev. Titus Jones .. ..S.	0	5	0
Mr. H. Lake .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. A. Curtis .....S.	0	5	0
Three Friends, 2/6	0	7	6
Carmarthen.			
Mr. David Lewis .....S.	0	5	0
Several Friends.....S.	0	12	0
Llanelly.			
William Thomas, Esq .....S.	1	0	0
David Evans, Esq.....S.	0	10	0
Henry Thomas, Esq.....S.	0	10	0
Mr. Wm. Samuel .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. David Watkins .....S.	0	5	0
Captain Simonds Samuel .....S.	0	5	0
John Evans, Esq .....S.	0	5	0
Rev. J. R. Morgan .....S.	0	2	6
Rev. William Hughes .....S.	0	2	6
Twelve Friends, 2/6	1	10	0
Swansea.			
John Cawker, Esq .....S.	0	10	0
Philip Ingram, Esq .....S.	0	6	0
J. M. Elley, Esq .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. Edward Roberts .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. Thomas Roberts .....S.	0	5	0
Rev. Samuel Davies.....S.	0	5	0
Mr. Edward Williams .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. Richard Chenning .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. John Lewes .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. F. J. Rayner .....S.	0	5	0
Twelve Friends, 2/6.....S.	1	10	0
Hull.			
Mr. B. Baker .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. George Greenwood .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. John Dalton .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. J. H. Hill .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. James Stephenson .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. W. H. Hopper .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. J. McPherson.....S.	0	5	0
Mr. J. Wilkinson .....S.	0	5	0
Friends	0	10	0
Gloucester.			
Mr. W. H. Coller .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. R. Hastie .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. B. Goodburn .....S.	0	5	0
Young Men's Book Society .....S.	0	10	6
Friends	0	7	6
Cinderford.			
Mr. W. Rhodes.....S.	0	5	0
Mr. Richard Tyndall .....S.	0	5	0
Rev. Philip Rees and friends	0	6	0
Isaiah Trotter, Esq .....S.	0	10	0